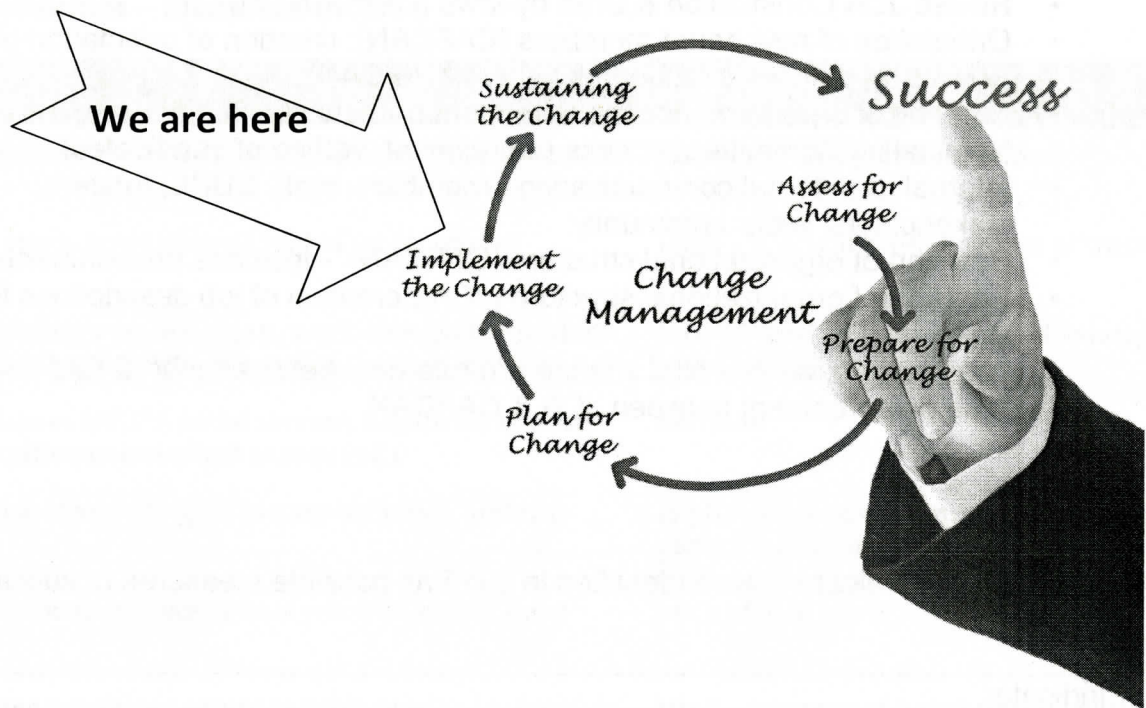


**Jamaican Canadian Association
Review of Transition Process 2012 - 2016**



Background

The JCA Transition Team was tasked with implementing the recommendations in the *WORKING GROUP ON THE FUTURE OF THE JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION's report*.

Transition Team's Mandate

- To provide backbone support for all three boards as required
- Identify gaps that need to be addressed by any or all boards
- Monitor risk assessment plan
- Conduct audit of assets and prepare report for respective boards
- Provide ongoing updates on transition to JCA membership
- Communicates transition updates to boards, wider community
- Undertake review of JCA committee structure, including focus groups, workshops

Major Action Identified by Transition Team

- Budget process – separation of budgets, determination of cost sharing arrangement
- Application for Charitable Status (CAFCAN)
- Revise JCA Constitution & Draft by-laws (CAFCAN)
- Orientation of new board members (CAFCAN); creation of orientation plan
- Review of policies, procedures (JCA & CAFCAN)
- Creation of a performance measurement framework
- Nominating Committee process (recruitment, vetting of candidates)
- Internal & external communication - members, staff, CUPE, funders, stakeholders, wider community
- Revision of organizational structure (CAFCAN) - includes environmental scan
- Revision of organizational structure (JCA); creation of job descriptions for new staff
- Legal requirements - cost sharing arrangement between JCA & CAFCAN; Trustee agreement between JCA & CAFCAN

The following indicators were identified in 2015 as possible measures of success for the transition:

Indicator
A minimum of 60% of members can clearly articulate changes
10% increase in paid members (new or returning)
5% increase in active volunteers
Minimum of 5 new partnerships developed during year
Board members have a clear understanding of their role within 2 quarters
Each board members executes minimum of 3 actions/initiatives based on role within 2 quarters
100% of board stays in role in the first year
90% of activities on events calendar are executed within first year
90% of action items from quarterly meetings are addressed by deadline

In completing this overall evaluation, the transition team reviewed the list and noted that some were not the best indicators – some could not be tracked accurately and others we not readily accessible was not able to measure some of the indicators identified

Risk Assessment – identified in 2014

Risk Event	Risk Rating
CAFCAN incorporation is not secured within three months of start of 2014 fiscal	Low – organization incorporated
CAFCAN charitable status is not secured within six months of incorporation	High – JCA will continue to act as trustee
CAFCAN Board of Directors are not able to work effectively together and/or learning curve is preventing appropriate decision making	Low – board is moving forward; strategic planning underway
Current operational issues for JCA social services negatively impact CAFCAN (funder requirements not met as required)	Medium
JCA's financial situation is impeding its success including ability to hire support staff a) JCA Treasurer b) Current issues with finance office are not resolved within three months	High – ongoing concern and actual financial picture is not clear; Transition Team & Nominating Committee meeting March 5 to put a plan in place
Nominating Committee not able to secure suitable candidates for JCA board positions	High – turnover of board members is a concern; Transition Team & Nominating Committee meeting March 5 to put a plan in place
Lack of clear boundaries between CAFCAN and JCA as well as Transition Team	Low/Medium – the Transition Team addresses role clarity at each meeting; operational transition team is intended to deal with this issue; board members were assigned a mentor

The Review

1. What Worked

- ✓ The 2012 – 2016 transition at JCA occurred with 100% volunteer efforts
- ✓ A solid plan for change was put in place
- ✓ Concerted effort at engagement for approximately one year prior to decision by members to adopt recommendations
- ✓ Consistent team to move process forward – three years of commitment
- ✓ The Working Group identified the following principles in 2012 and worked hard to achieve all:

- Transparent and open communication
- Opportunities for engagement of various members
- Responsible sound decisions based on evidence
- ✓ New processes put in place to support new board of directors (2014 – 2015)
 - Orientation sessions
 - Revised orientation package
 - Regular check-in by Transition Team
 - Board members assigned a mentor to help learn the role and serve as advisor
 - Orientation process put in place for Finance Committee members
- ✓ Continuation of Committees (Women, Building, Membership) & activities (Scholarship) that were already active meant that members continued to feel comfortable
- ✓ Addressed issues as they arose
- ✓ First large scale effort to electronically document each stage for which we were responsible - the process, decisions and new processes/procedures – all are saved on JCA hard drive

2. Mixed results

Communication

- Ongoing efforts and methods to share changes with members and others had mixed results
- Communication efforts not consistent and ongoing – not effective use of email & social media
- Ongoing issues with email list resulted in some members not receiving any communication
- Primary updates were provided at the quarterly meetings; these were then posted on the web-site
- Since January, more concerted efforts to communicate changes and address concerns
 - March/April weekly updates
 - Transition Chair attendance at Membership, Women, Building Committee meetings plus discussions with individuals
- Relationship building between JCA & CAFCAN board of directors
- Some board members were more willing than others to consult with the Transition Team, other members to resolve issues and/or gain a historical perspective
- Communication from the Transition Team to the JCA & CAFCAN boards were sent via the President & Chair to be shared with the respective boards; this was not consistently done
- Process of recruitment and vetting of new board members is good and based on best practices used by other non-profit organizations; the success of the recruitment process will be determined by the number of new board members that are able to fully assume the duties of their positions and complete their term.

JCA Foundation

- The Foundation initially had great energy but due to the resignation of the Interim Chair, the work has stalled
- Sufficient time was not spent on ensuring everyone understood the vision and mandate

3. What did not work

- × Almost 100% turnover of board for the 2014 – 2015 means that learning curve for new board (who were also new members) was steep despite the support from the Transition Team
- × Some grey areas were not clarified
- × Communication issues
- × Tension between Transition Team and some JCA Board members
- × Tension between JCA & CAFCAN – finances, expectations, cost sharing
- × Pace of change related to separation too slow for some areas of responsibilities
- × Clearly defining JCA's identity and role without social services

Summary – Lessons Learned

- For various reasons, communication was and continues to be an issue for JCA. Some members had no clear understanding of the difference between the social services side and membership side (pre separation) and therefore were confused about the impact of change,
- Financial constraints continue to hamper the organization overall and change efforts in particular.
- The right leadership during periods of change is crucial to its success; the change was hampered by a lack of clear , action and appropriate communication for 19 months.
- JCA's leadership in the coming years should focus on mentoring and succession planning

Next Steps

In order to get to the sustainability period of change, the work of transition must become the responsibility of the Board of Directors. They are asked to include it in their work plan going forward and consult regularly with the organization's 'brain trust'. Some of the responsibilities undertaken by the Transition Team can become part of the responsibilities of the pending Advisory Committee. Finally, the Board must create a concrete plan of action to fund the positions identified in the *WORKING GROUP ON THE FUTURE OF THE JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION's report*.